

HEALTH
13 NOV 58
C.M.

Handwritten signature

Yeovil Rural District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1957

YEOVIL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1957

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

Medical Officer of Health	:	P. Power Fox, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Senior Public Health Inspector	:	Brynmor Morris, M.A.P.H.I.
Additional Public Health Inspectors	:	S.R. Baylis, M.A.P.H.I. Douglas N. Sibley, M.A.P.H.I.
Housing Inspector	:	S.R. Barham.
Housing Welfare Officer	:	Mrs. D.K. Trow.

---oooooooooooooooo---



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b3024836x>

TO THE
CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS
OF THE
YEOVIL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

---ooOoo---

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1957.

In general, the health of the community, as in previous years, has been satisfactory. The number of infectious diseases however, showed an increase, 294 as compared with 136 for the previous year. The increase was mainly due to Measles 106 and Whooping Cough 103. There was also an increase in the number of cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis notified 13 as compared with 8 for the year 1956. (page 9).

The Standardised Death Rate was 9.3, which is a decrease on the previous year, which was 9.5. The Death Rate for England and Wales was 11.5.

It will be noted from the table showing age at death, that the majority of deaths occurred in people over the age of 70, 127 deaths occurring 70 years and over, out of the total number of deaths, 204.

The Birth Rate increased from 14.8 for the year 1956 to 17.06, which is above that of England and Wales, namely, 16.1.

FLUORIDATION

In my report for the year 1956, I showed the value of sufficient fluorine in the water in the prevention of caries of the teeth. Unfortunately, the Yeovil water supply is lacking in fluorine, the amount present being less than 0.1 parts per million. The minimum amount which should be present to prevent caries is 1 part per million, though in some parts of England, the amount of fluorine present is 7 or 8 parts per million. Fluoridation of water is the rectifying of a defect of the naturally occurring water supply by the addition of a fluoride so that the fluorine content is 1 to 2 parts per million.

Reports I have read in the various medical publications during the past year, have confirmed my belief in the value of such a measure and any future planning of water mains should take into consideration the probability that fluoridation will be an essential process in the future communal water supply. Yeovil is fortunate in that for the past two years, the School Dental Service has been fully manned; there is no doubt that this is due to the far sighted policy of the Council in providing housing accommodation when desired for the Dental Officers.

CARE OF THE AGED

I referred in my previous report to this problem, which, owing to the increased longevity of the population, becomes more difficult each year.

As the Council already know, there is a liaison between the Hospital and Public Health services, by which a questionnaire is completed by the

Health Visitors. This questionnaire is of some value in determining the priority for admission, but fails to give a complete picture. I am convinced that the optimum use of hospital beds will not be achieved until a Consultant Geriatrician is appointed to this area. If such an appointment were made, old people could be visited in their home and an accurate assessment could then be made of the necessity for admission to hospital, based on an accurate knowledge of the medical and social conditions. The questionnaire has contributed somewhat to the welfare of the aged, as the W.V.S. are informed of the names and addresses of old people, and from this information are able to supply, if required, hot meals through the "Meals on Wheels" service.

More recently the religious denomination of old people has been recorded and the appropriate Minister of Religion informed, so that home visiting can be arranged and thus reduce the loneliness of such people.

MATERNAL SURVEY

A survey was carried out among mothers who were confined during the year 1957. As in the previous year, in order that sufficient births should be available for statistical purposes, the survey included mothers living in the Yeovil Borough as well as in the Rural District. (page 14).

Despite the improvement during the past 10 years in factors which tend to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, e.g., increased number of antibiotics, improved housing conditions and improved ante-natal care, conditions which one would expect to favour domiciliary confinements, the survey showed that a greater percentage of women had their confinements in maternity units rather than at home - 75.2% in 1957 as compared with 69% in 1956.

The average cost per patient for confinement in a maternity unit in Yeovil is £34.13s.6d., the cost for a patient confined at home is £16.9s. per case attended by the Somerset County Council. Allowance however must be made for the fact that in parts of the Rural District it is more difficult to provide Home Help service and for medical and nursing service to be readily available in an emergency. I consider that there is greater justification for institutional delivery in a rural area rather than in an urban area.

I have the pleasure in again recording my appreciation of the help and co-operation received from the Council, from the Public Health Committee and from the Members of the Staff.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

P. POWER FOX.

Medical Officer of Health.

YEOVIL RURAL DISTRICT

STATISTICS OF THE AREA FOR THE YEAR 1957

Area (in acres)	53,495
Rateable Value (31st March, 1958)	£193,882
Estimated Produce of 1d. rate in year ending 31st March, 1958	£735,8s.11d.
No. of inhabited houses (31st March 1958)	7,162
Population	24,260

VITAL STATISTICS

	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>
Population	23,970	24,260
No. of births	356	391
Birth Rate per 1,000	14.8	16.1
No. of Deaths	228	204
Death Rate per 1,000	9.5	8.4
Infantile Mortality	25.2	12.7
Phthisis Death Rate .. .. .	.08	.04

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The Yeovil Rural District, comprising an area of 53,495 acres, is situated in the South-East area of the County of Somerset and is composed of 31 rural parishes.

The area in general is not very much above sea level; the greatest point of elevation being Ham Hill, 426 feet above sea level.

WATER SUPPLY

The water supply during the year has been satisfactory, the impounding reservoir at Sutton Bingham being completed in early December, 1955. The capacity of the reservoir is 575 million gallons, with an estimated net yield of 2.4 million gallons per day. Detailed information regarding bacteriological and chemical analyses are included in the Senior Public Health Inspector's Report.

METEOROLOGY

The climate is mild and relaxing. There is little fog or mist.

RAINFALL

The rainfall for the year 1957 as recorded at the Sutton Bingham Reservoir was 33.02 ins.

OCCUPATION

The main industry of the District is agriculture, which is chiefly of a dairying and grazing nature. In addition, the manufacture of gloves is an important industry, glove factories being located at Martock, Stoke-sub-Hamdon and at Tintinhull, in addition to the glove making which is carried out in the homes. A considerable proportion of people resident in the Rural District are employed in the Yeovil Borough.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Hospital Services are mainly situated in the Yeovil Borough. The South Petherton Hospital, which deals with infectious diseases is situated in the Rural District. The Hospital Services are administered by the South Somerset Hospital Management Committee, under the general direction of the South Western Regional Hospital Board. Situated in the Borough are

- (1) The Yeovil and District Hospital - an acute general hospital.
- (2) Summerlands Hospital - mainly used as a geriatric hospital.
- (3) Yeovil Maternity Hospital (Crossways) - 14 beds.
- (4) Balidon Maternity Hospital - a General Practitioners Unit - 17 beds.

The Yeovil Hospital consists of 84 beds, of which 6 are private. The number of in-patients treated was 2,447 and the number of new out-patients was 5,213. The number of X-ray examinations carried out was 18,874. In considering these figures, it must be borne in mind that the area which the hospital now serves has considerably increased. Despite the valuable services which the hospitals carry out, it cannot be stated that the present hospital buildings and equipment are adequate for the present and potential requirements of the Borough and surrounding district. The matter is under review by the responsible authorities.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are treated at the South Petherton Hospital (50 beds). In general, the Cubicle Block (10 beds) is only required, and the other 40 beds are utilized for post-operative cases, so relieving the strain on the Yeovil Hospital, and for General Practitioner patients and semi-chronic sick.

TUBERCULOSIS

A Chest Clinic is held on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Yeovil Hospital. Patients requiring in-patient treatment are admitted to Sanatoria at Quantock and Taunton.

CHRONIC SICK

Summerlands Hospital (97 beds), which is situated in the Borough, is the largest hospital in the area used for this purpose. This hospital was originally a Poor Law Institute built in 1837, and the layout etc., does not conform with the accepted standards of today. Further, there is a constant shortage of nursing staff, but despite these handicaps, valuable work is carried out by the staff of the hospital.

LABORATORY SERVICE

A small laboratory is located at the Yeovil Hospital. A Public Health Laboratory Service has a laboratory in Taunton, at which bacteriological examination of swab, blood, sputum and faeces is carried out. Bacteriological and chemical analyses for the examination of milk, foods, water supplies and sewage effluent are also carried out.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES

The Ambulance Service is a responsibility of the Somerset County Council. The Ambulance Control Office is located at Summerlands Hospital. The ambulances and the larger type of vehicles for sitting cases are in radio communication with the control office. A daily 24 hour service is maintained.

VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

The statistics furnished by the Registrar General show the number of births and deaths after correction has been made for transfers to the normal place of residence of the individuals concerned. From these figures can be calculated the "crude" birth and death rates. As, however, the highest mortality occurs at the two extremes of life, and industrial areas in general have a bigger proportion of people living in the middle age periods of life, some correction must be made for the irregularities of distribution as regards age and sex, as otherwise the death rate will afford no accurate means of comparing the healthiness of one district with another. This comparability factor is furnished by the Registrar General and applied to the "crude" birth or death rate, gives a standardised rate and enables comparison to be made with the rate for England and Wales, or with rates of other districts.

BIRTHS

(a) <u>LIVE BIRTHS</u>				<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	..	201	174	375	347
Illegitimate	..	7	9	16	9
Total	..	208	183	391	356
<hr/>					
Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 estimate population	..			16.1	15.8
Standardised Birth Rate per 1,000 estimate population	..			17.06	14.8
Birth Rate for England and Wales	..			16.1	15.7
(b) <u>STILL BIRTHS</u>				<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	..	1	4	5	4
Illegitimate	..	-	-	-	-
Total	..	1	4	5	4
<hr/>					
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still births	..			12.7	11.2
Still Birth Rate for England and Wales	..			22.4	23.0

DEATHS

			<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Deaths	..	101	103	204
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	..			8.4
Standardised Death Rate per 1,000 population	..			9.3
Death Rate for England and Wales				11.5
				10.5
				9.5
				11.7

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Puerperal Sepsis	..	..	Nil.
Other Puerperal Causes	..	..	1

INFANT MORTALITY

			<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	..	..	5	9
Deaths among legitimate infants	..	..	4	9
Deaths among illegitimate infants	..	..	1	-
Death Rate per 1,000 live births	..	..	12.7	25.2
Death Rate per 1,000 legitimate births	..	..	13.3	25.9
Death Rate per 1,000 illegitimate births	..	..	31.2	-

			<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	..	..	39	40
Deaths from Heart Disease (all ages)	..	..	55	102
Deaths from Phthisis (all ages)	..	..	1	2

BIRTHS

The total number of births was 391, 208 male and 183 female. Of these, 16 were illegitimate, 7 males and 9 females. The table below shows the birth rate for the previous ten years.

BIRTH RATES

1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
21.7	17.3	19.9	15.77	15.00	14.72	14.3	16.3	16.4	14.8	17.06

DEATHS

There was a decrease in the total number of deaths, 204 in 1957, as compared with 228 for the previous year. The Standardised Death Rate was 9.3 as compared with 9.5 for the previous year. The Death Rate for England and Wales was 11.5. The following table shows the age and sex incidence, and it will be noted that amongst the males, of the 101 deaths, 84 occurred amongst those 65 years and over, and 36 amongst those 75 years and over. Of the females, out of the total of 103 deaths, 90 were 65 years and over, 65 were 75 years and over.

AGES AT DEATH
1957

Ages at Death in years	Males	Females	Total
Under 1	2	3	5
1	-	1	1
5	3	-	3
15	-	2	2
25	4	-	4
45	8	7	15
65	29	18	47
Total under 70	46	31	77
70	19	7	26
75	12	18	30
80	8	23	31
85	9	9	18
90	4	9	13
95	3	6	9
Over 100	-	-	-
Total over 70	55	72	127
Totals	101	103	204

The Crude Death Rate for the past ten years is as follows:-

1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
13.42	10.3	11.66	11.26	10.48	10.13	7.6	9.34	10.2	9.5	9.3

The following table shows the causes of death and the sex distribution.

Causes of Death	1957	
	Males	Females
Tuberculosis Respiratory	1	-
Malignant Neoplasm Stomach	6	2
" " Lung, bronchus	3	2
" " breast	-	6
" " uterus	-	2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	11	7
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	1	-
Diabetes	3	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	10	15
Coronary disease, angina	15	8
Hypertension with heart disease	-	2
Other heart disease	11	19
Other circulatory disease	3	6
Influenza	6	1
Pneumonia	1	4
Bronchitis	6	1
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	-
Ulcer of Stomach and duodenum	1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	3	2
Hyperplasia of prostate	1	-
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	1
Congenital malformations	-	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	9	13
Motor Vehicle accidents	5	-
All other accidents	1	4
Suicide	2	5
	101	103

CANCER

The number of deaths due to Cancer (all forms) was 39. The table as set out below shows the incidence of Cancer for previous years.

1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
39	28	51	37	46	32	30	35	31	40	39

CANCER DEATH RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION:

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Yeovil Rural District	1.9	1.4	2.7	1.7	1.92	1.33	1.22	1.50	1.3	1.6	1.6
County of Somerset	2.07	1.9	1.9	1.89	2.00	1.98	1.84	2.06	2.045	1.89	2.054
England & Wales	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.94	1.96	1.99	1.99	2.035	2.056	2.1	2.1

INFANTILE MORTALITY

The number of children dying within the first twelve months of life was 5, as compared with 9 for the year 1956. The rate per thousand of live births was 12.7 as compared with England and Wales - 23.0.

The following table shows the number of deaths and the Infantile Mortality Rate as compared with previous years.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Number of deaths	8	14	7	12	9	7	9	9	9	5
Rate per 1,000 live births in Rural District	24.7	37.4	22.8	36.44	27.19	21.08	25.2	23.07	25.2	12.7
Rate per 1,000 live births in England & Wales	34	32	29.8	29.6	27.6	26.5	25.5	24.9	23.8	16.1

CAUSES OF DEATH

Cerebral Haemorrhage	..	1
Prematurity	..	1
Congenital Heart Disease	..	1
Pneumonia	..	1
Atelectasis	..	1
		<hr/> 5 <hr/>

AGE OF DEATH

Under 24 hours	Under 1 week	1 month or under	Under 1 year
3	4	5	5

MATERNAL MORTALITY

There was one maternal death during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the details of infectious diseases during the year and also the figures for the previous year.

Disease				Cases Notified	
				1957	1956
Food Poisoning	..	..	..	49	-
Poliomyelitis	..	..	..	13	8
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	7	14
Measles	..	..	..	106	67
Pneumonia	..	..	..	13	7
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	103	35
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	1	4
Typhoid	..	..	..	1	-
Malaria	..	..	..	-	1
Paratyphoid	..	..	..	1	-
Total	..	..	..	294	136

ANTERIOR POLIOMYELITIS

The number of cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis notified was 13, of whom 10 were definitely associated with Barwick - 9 occurring in the village, the remaining case being a child living in Stoford, but attending the Barwick School. Of these 10 cases, the first case was notified on the 18th July, 1957, the other cases occurring between the 18th and 29th of July, with the exception of one adult case which was notified on the 12th of August. In all these cases the clinical diagnosis was confirmed by laboratory tests, the cause of the infection being Group I Virus. Of these 10 cases, seven had some degree of paralysis with muscle weakness and wasting. At the time of making this report, all the patients except one, had made excellent recoveries.

Of the other 3 cases notified during the year, 2 were mild, but one patient had a severe paralysis involving all limbs of the body.

Cases of Poliomyelitis are classified into two groups, paralytic and non-paralytic. This classification can give a false impression of the disease. As Medical Officer of Health, I see practically all cases prior to admission to hospital - in general, I am in charge of all cases at South Petherton Hospital and as Divisional School Medical Officer, etc., I have the opportunity of observing their progress after discharge from hospital. I am of the opinion that all cases which are diagnosed and admitted to hospital as cases of Poliomyelitis, paralytic or non-paralytic, do develop some degree of muscle damage, varying from obvious paralysis of a limb or group of muscles to a generalised muscle weakness, which is not easily assessed by clinical examination. It has been my experience that any person who has had Poliomyelitis, even the so called mild non-paralytic type, require a much longer period of convalescence than patients who have had illnesses such as Pneumonia, Whooping Cough, etc., which at the time of the illness appear much more serious. Children in particular who have had Poliomyelitis even in the mildest form, tire very much more quickly than normal children, and this tiredness may lead to "behaviour" problems, unless it is recognised by the parents that despite the fact that the child appears fit and healthy, some muscle

damage has occurred and that it will take some months before the child is able to stand the stress and strain of normal life. It is partly for this reason that all patients who have had Poliomyelitis, even the very mild cases, are referred to the Orthopaedic Surgeon for assessment of any residual weakness and to ensure that they do not develop subsequent postural deformities.

DIPHTHERIA AND WHOOPING COUGH IMMUNIZATION

In general, all infants immunized against Diphtheria are also immunized against Whooping Cough. Provision is made for the occasional infant, who for certain medical reasons, immunization against Whooping Cough is not indicated, or because the parents do not wish the combined course of injections, for immunization against Diphtheria only to be carried out.

The number of infants under the age of 12 months immunized, was 228, the number under the age of 5 years was 288, and the total number of children under the age of 14 years was 323. The number of births for the year 1956 was 356, so that the percentage of infants immunized was 64%. This figure should be higher, 75% is the target to be aimed for, but as 45 children between the ages of 1 and 2 years were also immunized, the discrepancy is not quite so marked as would appear at first sight, as the percentage of children immunized under the age of 2 years is 76%. In addition, 174 children of school age received reinforcement doses.

VACCINATION

The number of primary vaccinations carried out was 265, of which 236 were for infants under the age of 1 year. In addition, 22 re-vaccinations were carried out.

The number of births for the preceding year was 356, so that the number of infants vaccinated was 66%.

All the above figures show a reduction on the previous year, but this reduction was due to the suspension of immunization in July, August and September, when cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis were occurring in the area. The percentage of infants immunized against Diphtheria in England and Wales for the year 1957, was 48%, and the percentage vaccinated was 43%.

TUBERCULOSIS

The number of cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified during the year was 5, Non-Pulmonary 2. There was one death recorded as due to Pulmonary and none for Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948
No. of cases notified Pulmonary ...	5	8	9	15	14	19	15	12	21	12
No. of cases notified Non-Pulmonary ..	2	5	6	5	1	8	4	1	2	4
No. of deaths Pulmonary	1	2	2	-	4	3	1	2	6	6
No. of deaths Non-Pulmonary ...	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	2	1
Death rate of respiratory Tuberculosis per 1,000 population	0.04	0.08	0.08	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.04	0.09	0.32	0.33

TUBERCULOSIS

Age	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M.	F	M	F	M	F
0 ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 ...	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
25 ...	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 ...	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 ...	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
55 ...	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 & upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4	1	1	1	1	-	-	-

MASS RADIOGRAPHY

During the year, the Mass Radiography Unit paid three visits to Yeovil and the surrounding area.

Examinations were carried out at Unity Hall, Westland Aircraft Company, Ltd., Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Martock, South Petherton and Haselbury Plucknett. It was hoped that by making an intensive effort, people who had not been examined previously would avail themselves, and in the case of the Yeovil Borough, a letter, giving details of the time and place where the Unit was operating, was delivered to each house. A similar letter was sent by post to each house in Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Martock, South Petherton and Haselbury.

No. of Examinations Carried Out				No. of Cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis Diagnosed	
				Active	Inactive
1948	4,260	...		9	32
1949	2,298	...		13	31
1950	2,316	...		4	41
1951	3,015	...		8	34
1952	4,191	...		9	37
1953	4,460	...		12	22
1954	4,561	...		6	32
1955	4,109	...		1	24
1956	3,490	...		2	75
*1957	7,520	...		3	4

*This figure includes examinations carried out in the Yeovil Borough.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE

INFANT WELFARE CLINICS

The establishment and maintenance of the Welfare Clinics are a direct responsibility of the Somerset County Council and during recent years the number of such clinics in the Yeovil Rural District has been increased to 7. At each clinic, other than the Houndstone Camp Clinic, a doctor engaged by the Somerset County Council, attends regularly, also a District Nurse. Facilities are available for the purchase of Infant Welfare Foods, including National Dried Milk, Orange Juice, etc., and certain proprietary dried milk preparations, which are sold at the clinics at special prices. Apart from other considerations, the clinics have an important educational value. Associated with each clinic is a Voluntary Committee, the value of whose services it would be difficult to overemphasize. The W.V.S. assist considerably by distributing the Foods from the Public Health Centre, Preston Road, Yeovil, to the individual clinics. The following table sets out the attendances, etc., at the various clinics.

	Mar- tock	Stoke- under- Ham	South Pether- ton	West Coker	Hound- stone	Wrax- Hill Road	Ilch- ester	Total
No. of children who attended for the first time	29	31	32	15	28	16	71	222
No. of children who attended during the year ...	105	100	81	58	141	74	174	706
Total attendances of children during the year ...	438	655	451	309	192	251	619	2,915
Average attendance of children per session ...	36	28	19	26	17	25	27	178
Total No. of child- ren examined by doctor	80	45	66	43	-	29	98	361
No. of sessions with medical officer	12	12	11	12	-	10	23	80
Total No. of sessions	12	23	24	12	11	10	23	115
No. of individual mothers who attended	85	83	78	47	175	48	130	646

BIRTHS

Live Births ..	Legitimate 375	Illegitimate 16	Total 391
Still Births ..	" 5	" -	" 5
<u>INFANT DEATHS</u>			
Number ..	Legitimate 4	Illegitimate 1	Total 5

BLOOD EXAMINATION CLINIC

This clinic was commenced in 1947, and was, I think, the first local authority clinic in Somerset. It is held at the Preston Road Clinic, Yeovil. Since its inception, 4,298 individual pregnant women have been examined, 718 examinations being carried out in 1957. The areas from which the patients are drawn, are, as would be expected, mainly the Yeovil Borough and Yeovil Rural District. Patients are referred by the medical practitioner or midwife, without previous appointment. A card showing the patient's blood group, and whether she is Rh. Positive or Rh. Negative, is forwarded to her direct, together with a covering letter emphasizing the importance of her retaining the card in case she ever requires a blood transfusion for any purpose. A report giving further information, including percentage of haemoglobin and W.R. test is forwarded to the private doctor, and a copy of this report is also forwarded to the midwife or Matron of the Maternity Home, depending on where the patient is having her confinement. Previously, similar information was forwarded to Yeovil Hospital in case the patient was admitted there for any reason and required a blood transfusion, but a copy is now forwarded direct by the laboratory doing the tests.

A record of all blood tests is also kept at the Public Health Department. In the case of second or subsequent pregnancies of Rh. Negative women, as the test is normally carried out early in pregnancy, a further test is carried out 6 to 8 weeks before the expected date of confinement, to exclude antibodies. If antibodies are found to be present, and if in sufficient quantities to threaten the welfare of the baby, when born, arrangements are made for the baby to be born either at Bristol or Taunton, so that the blood transfusion of the baby can be carried out if necessary. The number of babies whose life has been saved by this procedure now runs into double figures and is a source of considerable gratification.

HAEMOGLOBIN ESTIMATION

An analysis of the haemoglobin percentage of all blood tests carried out in 1957 and from January to March, 1958, has been made. The analysis was sub-divided into (a) Mothers pregnant for the first time (b) Mothers pregnant for the second time (c) Mothers pregnant for third or more pregnancies.

The analysis showed that for group (a) the average haemoglobin level was 72.53% (342 patients examined), for group (b) 73.38% (214 patients examined) and for group (c) 70.4% (217 patients examined).

In general, the blood was examined at about the end of the third month of pregnancy and I consider that these levels are too low, and could prejudice the safety of the mother and baby at the confinement, apart from the fact that the expectant mother may have indefinite signs of ill-health during the pregnancy.

In a comparatively small number of patients, the haemoglobin level was retested at the 32/34th week of pregnancy, and it is interesting to note that in general, where the patient had shown a low level at the first test, that this level had increased, presumably due to iron treatment prescribed by the family doctor, and in the case of patients who showed a high level at the first test, frequently this level had fallen considerably when the second blood was taken. I am of the opinion that unless a blood test for haemoglobin is done for each expectant mother at the 32/34th week, so as to exclude anaemia, all expectant mothers should receive a course of iron in the last 6 to 8 weeks of pregnancy. It may be possible to arrange for a second blood examination of all expectant mothers at the 32/34th week of pregnancy, but such an arrangement can be carried out only with the co-operation of the family doctor and the Hospital Service.

MATERNITY SURVEY

As in the previous year, a survey was again carried out, based on women whose babies were born during the year 1957. In order to obtain sufficient large figures, the survey includes confinements both in the Yeovil Borough and in the Yeovil Rural District. Analyses of these figures gave the following results.

Domiciliary Confinements

144 women had their confinements at home, i.e., 24.8% of the total number of confinements under review. A medical practitioner was present in 36.8% of confinements and Analgesia was given in 67.3% of confinements. 7.6% of the women who had their confinements at home attended for ante-natal exercises.

Confinements in Maternity Units

435 women had their confinements in a maternity unit, i.e., 75.2% of the number under review. This percentage is higher than the previous year (69%), and shows the increasing trend in institutional midwifery. It is doubtful whether this trend is a desirable one, since apart from other factors, there is an increased risk of infection, especially that due to Staphylococcal organisms. Of the 435 patients admitted to maternity units, 171 were admitted on obstetrical grounds, 199 on social grounds, 14 as emergencies and 51 patients availed themselves of the amenity beds. A medical practitioner was present in 46.1% of confinements in maternity units.

Blood Tests

The number of women who had had a blood test either for the pregnancy under review, or for a previous pregnancy, was 573, i.e. 99%. This figure I regard as highly satisfactory.

Analgesia

I stated before that 67.3% of women who had a domiciliary confinement received some form of Analgesia. In the case of patients confined in maternity units, the figure was 81.9%.

Dental Treatment

The percentage of expectant mothers who had had dental treatment was 54.4%. This figure shows a slight improvement on the previous year, but it is recognized that all women should be dentally examined during pregnancy, and if necessary receive the appropriate treatment, since because of the demand of the foetus on the mother, there is an increased risk of dental caries.

Breast Feeding

The number of women who breast fed their babies in the first 14 days was 572, i.e. 98.7%. This percentage had fallen to 73.2% at the time this survey was carried out (14th day approximately). An additional survey carried out in the Yeovil Borough only, showed that when the babies were three months old the percentage of babies breast fed had fallen to 56%.

Ante-natal Talks

As in previous years, invitations are forwarded to expectant mothers having their first or second babies, to attend for a series of Ante-natal Talks. The number of women attending during 1957 was 87. In general, it is difficult for women living in the Yeovil Rural District to attend such talks.

HOME HELP SERVICE

This service continues to render excellent assistance and the following table indicates the scope of its activities.

No. of cases who received help in 1957:-

<u>Type of Case</u>	<u>Yeovil Rural District</u>
Maternity	17
Old Age and Infirmary	45
Tuberculosis	1
Chronic Illness	10
Emergency Illness	17
Families of motherless children	3
Total	<u>93</u>

A number of old age and chronic sick cases have received help for two or three years.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT

No action was taken under Section 47 of the above Act.

REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

The school health service provides for remedial and preventive treatment, and consists of:-

- (a) Routine and special medical inspections.
- (b) Minor Ailments treatment.
- (c) Cleanliness inspections of children by Health Visitors.
- (d) Dental Inspection and treatment.
- (e) A much expanded scheme, in co-operation with the Hospital services, for the treatment of defects of vision and of ear, nose and throat.

In addition the following services are also provided:-

- (f) Routine Mass Radiography of all children of school leaving age. Special examinations of children, irrespective of age, who have been thought to have been exposed to a particular risk of tuberculous infection have been carried out, with the co-operation of the Mass Radiography Service.
- (g) Routine Colour Vision testing of children.
- (h) Routine and special testing of children's hearing acuity.
- (i) Speech Therapy.
- (j) Ultra Violet Light clinics for debilitated children.
- (k) Routine immunization of children against diphtheria. This consists mainly of reinforcement inoculations of children already immunized, but children "missed" in infancy are immunized.
- (l) Breathing Exercises Clinic.

In addition to the above, arrangements exist for a special session at the Yeovil Borough Swimming Baths for the rehabilitation of certain types of physically handicapped children. A large proportion of these pupils are those who have had Anterior Poliomyelitis with a residual physical defect. The value of this scheme is now well established

and much credit is due to the work carried out by the local detachment of the British Red Cross.

The Breathing Exercises Clinic was established in 1950, and is intended mainly for children who have Asthma, but also for other children with a history of chest trouble and for whom breathing exercises are valuable. The number of children initially enrolled was 25, the number on the roll in December, 1957, was 37. The total number of attendances during the year was 498, and since the inception of the scheme, 106 children have been or are being treated. There is marked improvement physically of children attending regularly, as shown by the increase in chest expansion and also by clinical examination of the chest. In addition, the children develop a sense of self confidence as they learn how to combat an impending attack of asthma, and there is a marked improvement of physique and general posture.

The importance of asthma as a disease is frequently overlooked; about 3,000 deaths a year are ascribed to asthma, in England and Wales. In terms of capacity, it is stated that asthma accounts for 206 out of every 10,000 of incapacity for all causes. By comparison, the figure for tuberculosis is 108, and for gastric and duodenal ulcer together 224. It will be appreciated therefore, that any measure to help the asthmatic child is of importance, and it is recognized that the treatment of asthma in childhood is to a considerable extent truly preventive medicine. The main credit for the success of the clinic is due to the Health Visitors.

In the final paragraph of his Report for the years 1952 and 1953, Sir John Charles, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Education, states: "Change is a characteristic of all living things and if there is vitality in the school health service, it will adapt itself to changing circumstances." It is hoped that the foregoing remarks regarding the school health service in the South-East Somerset (Yeovil) Divisional Area are evidence that the service is endeavouring to cope with the present day problems.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1) WATER SUPPLIES

Operation of the treatment works and pumping station at the Sutton Bingham Reservoir continued without incident, providing a supply for most of the population of the Rural District and a bulk supply to the Yeovil Corporation.

Number of samples taken for Bacteriological Examination ..	93
Number of samples reported Satisfactory	84
Number of samples reported Unsatisfactory	9

Number of samples taken for Chemical Examination	18
Number of samples reported Satisfactory	18
Number of samples reported Unsatisfactory	NIL

Rainfall recorded during year at Sutton Bingham Reservoir
Rainfall Station. 33.02 ins.

2) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

ILCHESTER - Extension of sewer to The Mead started

3) PUBLIC CLEANSING

The collection of refuse is carried out periodically in all parishes.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS OF THE AREA

Inspections of Sewerage and Drainage	256
Inspections for Nuisances	174
Informal Notices served and complied with	52
Drainage Tests and Inspections	206
Houses Disinfected	8

Inspections of Water Supplies	701
-------------------------------------	-----

Slaughterhouse Inspections	320
----------------------------------	-----

Shops and Offices - It was not found necessary to take any special action under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934

Smoke Abatement - It was not found necessary to take any action.

SECTION D

HOUSING INSPECTIONS

1(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts).....	1,358
(b)	Number of inspections made for this purpose	1,941
2(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head 1 above) which were inspected and recorded under H.Con.Regs. 1925 and 1932	117
(b)	Number of inspections made for this purpose	146
(c)	Number of houses in which no action necessary	NIL
3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human occupation	77
4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects fit for human occupation	40

HOUSING ACTION

a)	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	42
b)	Number of houses demolished voluntarily or in consequence of informal action	NIL

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR (Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936)

1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	NIL
2)	Number of houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice:-	
a)	by Owners	NIL
b)	by Local Authority in default of Owners	NIL

Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which formal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied.	8
2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice:-	
a)	by Owners	8
b)	by Local Authority	NIL

Proceedings under Sections 11, 13 and 26
of the Housing Act, 1936

1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	11
2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	11
3)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Undertaking was given not to let	12

Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936

1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	NIL
2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenements or rooms having been made fit	NIL

HOUSING ACT, 1936 - OVERCROWDING

a)	i. Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year (ESTIMATED)	50
	ii. Number of families dwelling therein (ESTIMATED)	104
	iii. Number of people dwelling therein (ESTIMATED)..	366
b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	4
c)	i. Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	12
	ii. Number of persons concerned in such cases	36
d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	NIL

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

FOOD PREMISES

The following shows the number of food premises etc. by type of business:-

Cafes etc. 9

General Stores 60

Bakers 8

Butchers 13

Licensed Premises 66

Premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:-

Ice-cream 69

Preserved Foods 15

Number of Registered Dairies 5

Number of Inspections of Food Premises 156

Number of Private Slaughterhouses licensed 3

number operating 3

BYELAWS (UNDER SECTION 15 OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938)

It was not found necessary to take any action

ADULTERATION

The Council is not a Local Authority under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

MEAT INSPECTION - Carcasses and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year:-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	1696	4222	4140	8265	847	NIL
Number inspected	1696	4222	4140	8265	847	NIL
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	1	10	4	5	8	NIL
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	346	1487	6	1039	49	NIL
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tubercul- osis & cysticerci	21	34	0.14	12.5	6	NIL
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	2	31	1	NIL	3	NIL
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	46	1678	1	NIL	7	NIL
Percentage of the number inspected affected with T.B.	3	39	-	-	0.8	NIL
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	4	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	4	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	NIL	-	-	-	-	-
=====						
Weight of meat con- demned (in lbs.) for						
a) Tuberculosis	2380	40172	56	NIL	156	NIL
b) Cysticercosis	216	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
c) Other	1860	23052	278	2338	1935	NIL
Total Meat (in lbs) Condemned	4456	63224	334	2338	2091	NIL
=====						

YEOVIL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 1957.

To the Chairman and Members of the Yeovil Rural District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the annual report for the year ending 1957.

After Mr. Wilson's resignation in May, the department ceased to be responsible for the examination of proposals requiring permission under the Council's Building Byelaws and generally for the inspection of new building work. The work of the department during the year was mainly devoted to the inspection of houses in connection with the Slum Clearance Programme, the inspection of animals slaughtered for human consumption, the inspection of food premises and the connection of properties to Public Sewers.

HOUSING

Further progress was made with the Slum Clearance Programme as follows :-

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>HOUSES INCLUDED IN CLEAR-ANCE AREAS</u>	<u>INDIVIDUALLY UNFIT HOUSES</u>	<u>NO. OF FAMILIES TO BE REHOUSED</u>
ASH	-	8	6
BARWICK	3	5	5
EAST COKER	-	2	-
WEST COKER	-	1	1
MARTOCK	-	2	1
SOUTH PETHERTON	29	-	16
	<u>32</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>29</u>

In the following Parishes families were moved from unfit houses as follows :-

BARWICK	1
EAST COKER	2
ILCHESTER	5
YEOVIL WITHOUT	2

Assistance to move was given in five cases.
In one case the house furniture and occupants were found to be dirty and verminous and appropriate action was taken to ensure that the family made a satisfactory start in their new home.

RENT ACT, 1957

No applications were received for Certificate of Disrepair.

HOUSING ACTS 1949 and 1954

48 applications for Improvement Grants involving 64 houses were received and approved during the year.

Total cost of Improvement Works	£53,609	17.	4d
Total value of Grants approved	£12,725	0.	0d.
No. of houses involved which are owner occupied		15	
No. of houses involved which are let		49	

WATER SUPPLY

93 samples of water from public and private supplies were submitted to the County Laboratory for Bacteriological examination, as follows :-

	<u>PUBLIC SUPPLIES</u>	<u>PRIVATE SUPPLIES</u>
Number of samples taken	89	4
Reported satisfactory	84	-
Reported unsatisfactory	5	4

18 samples of water from public supplies were taken for chemical analysis. All were reported to be satisfactory.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND SEWERAGE

An extension of the Public Sewer to serve houses at Ilchester Mead was started.

Considerable time is devoted by the department to investigating and abating nuisances arising from the discharge of domestic and farm drainage into ditches in those parishes and parts of parishes in which sewerage systems are unsatisfactory or absent. In most cases abatement works afford only a temporary solution pending the provision of new sewage and sewerage systems for the parishes concerned

FOOD BUSINESS PREMISES

These were all inspected during the year. It was not found necessary to take formal action under the provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations 1955.

SAMPLING OF ICE CREAM

15 samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological examination.

12 samples were placed in Provisional Grade I
2 samples were placed in Provisional Grade III
1 sample was placed in Provisional Grade IV

Some of these samples were taken as a result of complaint received from neighbouring authorities of ice cream manufactured in this area failing to satisfy the test. Three consecutive unsatisfactory samples were taken before it was proved that the cartons into which the ice cream was packed before sale were contaminated. It was eventually found necessary to advise the manufacturer to destroy a large quantity of cartons.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Three private slaughterhouses operated during the year.

A total of 19,170 animals were killed and inspected, an increase of 2,013 on the previous year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

Those inspected were found to be in good order.

The total number of outworkers resident in the district was 955.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND SALVAGE

The amount of salvageable materials sold during the year and the prices realised are as follows :-

Heavy, medium and light scrap iron			
10 tons. 15 cwt.	£50.	9.	8d.
Light scrap metal (tins)			
27 tons. 6 cwt.	£27.	6.	0d.

RODENT CONTROL

The following is a summary of the work carried out by the Council's Rodent Operators during the year.

TYPE OF PROPERTY

	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agric- ultural	All other including business & industrial	Total
Number of inspections during year as result of :-					
(a) notification	-	224	Nil	12	236
(b) survey under the Act.	66	6913	423	343	7745
Number of properties found to be infested					
(a) major	-	-	-	-	-
(b) minor	49	248	3	12	312
Number of infested properties treated by the Council's Operators	49	248	Nil	12	309
Number of informal notices served	Nil	Nil	3	Nil	3
Number of infestations treated by occupiers after service of informal notices	Nil	Nil	3	Nil	3

It was not found necessary to take formal action under the provisions of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

Your obedient servant,

BRYNMOR MORRIS,

Senior Public Health Inspector.

